

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing in response to your decision to cut CommPACT schools from your budget. I am both a parent and employee of West Side Middle School a CommPACT school in Waterbury CT. As a parent, I have always been involved in my children's education and began volunteering at West Side Middle while 4 of my 6 children were in attendance.

That was 8 years ago.

West Side presented a very unwelcoming environment for me, especially since I was the only regularly attending volunteer. I soon realized that it wasn't me per se that they were against. It was the low morale in the staff that infested the halls.

About a year later, the CommPACT Schools opportunity presented itself. I remember being so excited about all of the changes that our school was going to go through. Changes that the staff, parents and students collectively wanted but did not know how to implement themselves.

I encourage you to visit our school. It was a lot of work, a lot of meetings and a lot of schedule changes, but it was well worth the effort. Seven years later, we are proud CommPACT School. We continue to work together for the betterment of the school community as a whole.

There are several committees (cadres) that meet every other week after school hours, to work on resolving school issues or for the planning of future events (morale boosters) for both the students and staff. As the needs of the school change yearly, our cadres and their work will also change to meet those needs. To date, our cadres include the School Unity Cadre, School Operations and Safety Cadre, Math Cadre, Reading Cadre, Parent Engagement and Technology Cadre, PBIS Cadre and the Student Recognition Cadre. Through CommPACT's generous support, West Side recently unveiled a state of the art Parent Resource Center that is not only home to West Side parents, but to many community members. Workshops are conducted monthly based on surveyed interest of the parents and are offered to the community as well.

I encourage you to reconsider your decision to eliminate funding for CommPACT schools. Our school has been transformed and is now an environment suitable for teaching and learning and a welcoming school to our parents and community members. Without CommPACT's continued support, we would not be where we are today. This work has already begun in other schools and I hope they have the opportunity to make the positive changes necessary that directly affect the most important people that we serve, our students.

Sincerely,

Grisell Myers
Parent Liaison
West Side Middle School

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